The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor according to the labor viewpoint, also legislative, judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1588 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1941 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 31, NO. 37

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Charles A. Lindbergh forfeited the respect of the American people when he issued his recent radio blast charging President Roosevelt, the British and Jews with fomenting war.

Lindbergh has become one of the nation's leading isolationists. As such he was entitled to a fair hearing and to express his views. In this country, free speech and free assemblage are guaranteed to all. But when any American citizen descends to the level of attacking racial and religious minorities and parrots Hitler's vicious anti-Semitism, he cannot expect his intelligent fellow citizens to regard his remarks with anything but disgust.

It is too bad—too bad for Lindbergh personally, and too bad for the isolationist cause he espouses. If anything were calculated to undermine public confidence in Lindbergh and isolationism it was his debauch into anti-Semitism. If those who support Lindbergh's views—the interventionists, if you please—needed any evidence to confirm their charges that Lindbergh is playing Hitler's game in America, Lindbergh himself supplied it.

The Lone Eagle was strong and silent for many years. It is too bad he couldn't have remained that way and retained his popularity. Because ever since he has become articulate, Lindbergh has hurt himself by trying to hurt the friends of the United States and injure the national policy of the United States.

The Nazi Line

Several of Lindbergh's isolationist colleagues have recently fallen under suspicion of harboring anti-Semitic views. The current Senatorial "investigation" of movie propaganda heats all the earmarks of a Ku Klux Klan lynching party. The chief witness in the star-chamber proceedings in Senator Nye. In his testimony Senator Nye berated Charlie Chaplin's picture, "The Dictator," on the ground that it ridiculed a foreign country and a foreign ruler. The country was Nazi Germany and the ruler Adolph Hitler. It is rather unseemly at this late day and age for a United States Senator to get sensitive about Hitler.

Another isolationist, whose attitude is more than suspect, is John L. Lewis. A strong note of anti-Semitism has been apparent in all of his speeches since he pulled the prize political boner of all time in the blatant Pearl Mendal campaign. Lewis has aped so many Hitlerian methods in the past that it shouldn't surprise us in the least if he becomes an open anti-Semite. But it certainly is a disgraceful position for a labor leader to find himself in.

It seems to us that it is up to the America First Committee and every other isolationist group in America to repudiate and disavow Lindbergh's statement promptly. In this case, obviously, silence means consent. We call upon Senator Nye, John L. Lewis, Gen. Robert E. Wood and other isolationist leaders to speak up at once.

The Lindbergh Mystery

Lindbergh's case is truly mystifying. Here is a young man who became a national hero with his epochal flight to Paris, who became even more than a hero by accepting his laurels so diffidently and modestly. The entire country mourned with him in the tragic death of his son. Even when Lindbergh virtually renounced his own country and went to live in Europe with his family, America viewed his decision charitably and sympathetically.

Then, until Lindbergh received and accepted a decoration from Hitler and was pictured in friendly circumstances with Goering, that American began to outgrown some shreds of his former popularity.

This, too, was forgotten when Lindbergh returned to America for the avowed purpose of assisting his country in the development of the strongest possible air force. To the earliest days of his career Lindbergh was convinced of the superior might of Nazi Germany in the air and dispelled the foolishly overconfident attitude of our own leaders as to the superiority of our air forces. He served his country well. But when he counseled appeasement and tried to inspire fear, when he tried to make Americans believe that Germany was invincible and that we should, therefore, bow to the dictates of Hitler, Charles Lindbergh erred grievously.

We have always liked this young man and it saddens us considerably that he should have come to his present pass. We don't know what motivated him to emerge from the silences and start making speeches. Undoubtedly, he was motivated by the best of motives and he honestly thought it was patriotism, yet there are those who say ambition or fame or traitors moved him. In any event, he has shamed and besmirched himself more thoroughly by his own statements than any amount of charges by his detractors ever could.

Adequate Defense Contracts Urged By American Federation of Labor

Washington, D. C.—The demand that industrial production be speeded up and the contract system adjusted to defense needs, together with protection for workers under the priorities plan, featured the September issue of Labor's Monthly Survey for Defense published by the American Federation of Labor.

"To meet the huge armament need, American union members are eager to put their entire strength behind the Survey said.

"We know that this war to save our freedom must be won by production. But we are confused because, while we are asked for an all-out defense effort on the one hand, on the other we see defense contracts denied and men laid off in plants well able and eager to serve their country. Widespread priority unemployment is broken up in full force last month. Thousands were thrown out of work, and we saw efficient work forces cut to the bone in many plants although workers and management were eager to get defense contracts and do their part.

"Failure to plan ahead accounts for today's confusion as industry shifts to defense production. The change is sudden, the shortages of skills grim and acute. Too little has been done to supply defense work as civilian work is cut by priorities. Meanwhile, thousands of workers have been laid off, disrupting efficient work forces which will soon be needed for defense."

Emphasizing the necessity for quick action on defense contracts, the Survey continued:

"We have two front lines in this war to save democracy: The men and women fighting under the flag on battlefront, on land, air and sea; and the men and women at the factory front who supply them with munitions and machines.

"But at the production front are squarely behind this defense effort. We want to do our part effectively. We want citizens in a free country to demand that our government provide the means to speed the change-from civilian to defense production that must take place throughout the nation. We demand that in every community where starved by metal priorities, defense contracts shall be awarded before, and not after, an efficient work force has been destroyed by lay-offs. We demand that adequate engineering service be provided for such plants, for this alone can hasten the change, save the work and contract for defense preparation, and prevent unemployment. We demand that contracts be broken down that production of a defense article here and parts can be carried into hundreds of thousands of plants and that not a machine or a man shall be idle. Give us our chance to produce and we will turn out the goods.

"Every weak of precious time and great hardship for workers will result if the government fails to provide adequate engineering service for the defense change-over."

Mediation Board Settles Carmen's Strike Against Pullman Company

Washington, D. C.—Settlement of the hard-fought three-month strike of the Brotherhood Railway Carmen at the Pullman Standard Car Manufacturing Company in Michigan City, Ind., was announced by the National Defense Mediation Board.

The board spent three days in conferences with representatives of the management and the local union before winning an agreement from the anti-union company. Charles W. Burchfield, International representative of the Carmen, participated on behalf of President Felix H. Knight.

Terms agreed upon were put before the 1,500 strikers for ratification.

While these terms have not been announced, pending approval, it is known that the company, for the first time in its history, agreed to sign a check-off recognizing the union, and agreeing to respect seniority rights of workers.

This achievement comes as a climax to three strikes in the past eight months. Two of them centered chiefly in the year when the management refused to deal with the union, even though it represented nearly 100 per cent of the workers.

After these strikes ended, the company still stalled in negotiations, and

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AFL Membership Tops All Records; Meany Discloses Gains of 321,613

Washington, D. C.—The total dues-paid membership in the American Federation of Labor at the end of its fiscal year, Aug. 31, 1941, was 4,569,-613, Secretary-Treasurer George Meany announced.

This all-time high figure represents a gain of 321,613 members in the past year. The membership as of Aug. 31, 1940, was 4,247,463.

In making public this preliminary membership report (the full report will be published in the proceedings to be submitted at the opening session of the American Federation of Labor's forty-first annual convention, Oct. 6, in Seattle) Mr. Meany emphasized that this figure include only membership on which national and international unions and local trade and federal labor unions pay per capita tax to the American Federation of Labor.

"The total does not include unemployed or floating members, estimated at more than a half million.

"Within the past eight years," Mr. Meany said, "the membership of the American Federation of Labor has more than doubled. In 1933 we had only 2,100,000 members. Since then our movement has grown rapidly in size despite the fact that 2 million members left us when their unions joined the CIO in 1935. Our growth has been steady and healthy. We are setting new records every day.

"Naturally, the expansion of industry due to the national defense program has helped swell our membership totals during recent months. But for the most part, our gains are due entirely to unremitting organization work. The great bulk of our new members come from the ranks of working men and women who hitherto were unorganized in industries where unions could not get a foothold before.

"I wish to emphasize that the American Federation of Labor reports only dues-paid membership, as shown by our books and financial records. Ours is not a claimed membership; it is an official, tax-paid membership.

"Within the coming year, we have every confidence that through organization and education we will be able to go over the five million mark with our paid-up membership total."

Democracy's Future Depends On Labor, Tobin Declares In Radio Interview

Washington, D. C.—Democracy's future depends on the cooperation of President Daniel J. Tobin of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, declared in a radio interview sponsored by the Department of Justice.

The common cause in which all labor has enlisted, Mr. Tobin said, is "the preservation of liberty and justice—and the downfall of dictatorship and all mean little 'ism' cults that are cluttering up the world today."

The interview, titled "I Am An American" interview, Mr. Tobin briefly sketched his career as a workman and labor leader, and told why he came to this country from Ireland at the age of fourteen and pointed to youth in Cambridge, Mass., working during the day and attending night classes in the evening. "Long before low pay and participation in a disastrous strike, he said, "roused in me a determination to see that the working class should gain fair treatment at the hands of employers. Only sixty hours a week for a small pittance."

In the year 1900 Mr. Tobin joined the newly organized Teamsters Union and became a member of Local 25, a trade from which he has never since been still retains membership. He was elected President of the International Union in 1907 and has been re-elected unanimously at each succeeding convention.

"A democracy's future," Mr. Tobin said in the interview, "isn't determined by the people or by the pleasure seekers. The future of a free nation depends on the worker—the millions of little spokes in the wheel of our nation's life.

"Workers are the backbone of any nation—and give every nation what they have—money, freedom, their lives and the lives and hopes of their sons and daughters—making the supreme sacrifice in every way possible to save the freedom which is the heritage of all men."

Moreschi Urges National Defense Aid In Report To Laborers' Convention

St. Louis, Mo.—Full cooperation of the International Hod Carriers' Building and Common Laborers' Union of America in the "prosecution and realization of the national defense program" was pledged by Dan W. Moreschi, president of the union, in his report to the delegates at the organization's eighth convention here.

More than 1,400 delegates, representing 250,000 members, are attending the five-day gathering.

"Our organization," Moreschi said, "there exists a national emergency calling for sacrifices. We adopt the principle of our national government and the entire population are at stake. In order to preserve these standards of American liberty and way of life, it is necessary that our organization, together with the entire labor movement, cooperate with our government's defense effort."

"Organized labor in general," Moreschi continued, "should command and receive equality in the defense of the United States in his steadfast principle of preserving the rights of labor."

According to reports of the executive board and the international secretary, also submitted to the delegates, the International has grown since its establishment in 1903, from twenty-three locals to 1,038. Member locals are in every state as well as in Canada, Hawaii, Panama and Alaska. General and death benefit funds of the International total more than $2,000,000.

Failure of the International to hold a convention in the last two years since 1911 is "probably the most disastrous thing that could befall any organization by the public, the press, and some of our locals" Moreschi reported. "For the benefit of those who might not have actual knowledge," his report makes clear that in accordance with the constitution of the International, membership referenda have been issued at five year intervals since 1911, resulting in a negative vote, with the exception of the one held this year, on the question of whether a convention should be held.

Employers Who Use Defense to Lower Labor Standards Scored by Fleming

Hastings, Neb.—General Philip B. Fleming, administrator of the Wage-Hour Act, launched a new attack on sweatshop conditions in the national defense as an alibi for destruction of labor standards.

Addressing the Nebraska State Federation of Labor here, Fleming warned that the 40-hour week is a necessary safeguard in the act would simply aggravate unemployment.

Section 7, par. (2) of the act, Fleming pointed out, "Just to permit a mere handful of "em to work long hours without overtime pay, some people would be willing to throw the millions more also to toil long hours without the overtime penalty—people in textile and cigarette factories, packing plants, lumber yards and the like.

"Does Great Britain, which is now fighting with its back to the wall and has practically its entire able-bodied population at work, need relaxed overtime pay standards, the Wage-Hour chief inquired.

"Virtually all British workers," he said, "are being paid at least time and one-half for all hours worked over the normal work week."

PAY BOOST CONTRACT WON BY TRENTON BUS WORKERS

Trenton, N. J.—Division 840 of the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employes of America, announced the signing of a new contract containing valuable benefits for employes of the working con...tions with the Receivers of the Trenton Transit Company which purchase bus service on approximately 200 miles of route in this area.

The contract provides for an increase of five cents an hour in the wages of operating employes, raising the rate from 70 cents to 80 cents an hour, and an increase of 20 cents an hour for the skilled trades in the mechanical department, raising their hourly rates from 72 cents to 92 cents.

News Briefs

W. C. DOHERTY ELECTED LETTER CARRIERS CHIEF

The convention of the National Association of Letter Carriers at Los Angeles, Calif., selected William C. Doherty, of Cincinnati, now a member of the Executive Board, as President to succeed Edward J. Gainer, veteran labor chief, who retired after serving 28 years as President. The convention honored Gainer with a stirring demonstration for his long service in his union and all organized labor.

POSTAL EMPLOYES SEEK HIGHER SALARY RATES

Two unions of postal employes affiliated with the American Federation of Labor—The National Federation of Post Office Clerks and the National Association of Letter Carriers—went on record at their conventions for pay increases.

Each of the unions voted to carry on intensive work for legislation to establish a salary scale of $2,600 to $3,000 a year in place of the present range of $1,440 to $2,100. Both unions ...essed the fact that postal wage rates have not been raised since 1925 and that rising living costs justify increases now.

ALFREDO RODRIGUEZ DIES; WEST VA. LABOR OFFICIAL

Charleston, West Va. — Organized labor in West Virginia suffered a severe loss in the death of Alfredo Rodriguez, of Welch, West Va., American Federation of Labor Organizer and State Secretary of the A. F. of L. Building Trades Department.

Rodriguez died of pneumonia at the Bluefield Clinic September 8th.

The funeral at Bluefield was under the direction of the West Virginia State Federation of Labor, which was represented by Secretary-Treasurer George Andrews. Frank Sloan represented Teamsters Local No. 175.

"We have lost a most able worker in Southern West Virginia in the passing of Vice President Rodriguez," Secretary-Treasurer Andrews said.

STRIKES HIT LOWEST POINT IN 12 MONTHS

Washington, D. C.—This is bad news for anti-labor propagandists.

Reports issued by three government agencies—the army, navy and U. S. Conciliation Service—show that strikes at plants producing defense materials at the lowest point in 12 months.

These agencies disclosed that there were only about a dozen strikes in the whole country, and most of them so small as to have practically no effect on defense production.

"Over-all figures for these walkouts stood at less than 10,000—about one-fifth of 1 per cent of the number employed on defense jobs.

LOCKHEED MACHINISTS RATIFY PAY RISE PACT

Los Angeles, Calif.—Aeronautical Lodge, No. 727, International Association of Machinists, ratified a new contract with the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation and its subsidiary, Vega Airplane Company, $24,986,079 in additional wages during the next year.

The contract provides a 10-cent-per-hour blanket increase in pay to every employe who was on the payroll last July 1 and a 60-cent-an-hour minimum wage for unskilled beginners, to increase at the rate of 5-cents-an-hour every 30 days until a minimum of 76 cents an hour has been reached.

PRIORITIES ARE MENACE TO BUILDING INDUSTRY

Washington, D. C.—America's third largest industry—building construction—"is completely paralyzed unless the government takes drastic action to break bottlenecks in the flow of materials to the industry.

That warning was sounded by Harry C. Bates, president of the Bricklayers' Union and chairman of the A. F. of L. Committee on Housing.

"Over $4,000,000,000 in building work is being curtailed in direct construction and another four to five million in related fields," Bates declared. "Already it is being strangled.

"Because of the lopsided manner in which the defense priorities system is functioning, supplies for residence construction are being cut off. As a result, thousands of workers have been thrown out of jobs.

"Unless action from now there will be fearful unemployment unless Federal agencies take immediate steps to head off a collapse."

UNION LABEL CEMENT, LIME

Washington, D. C.—The Union Label Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor issued the following statement in behalf of the union label campaign:

The Washington-Idaho Lime Products Company is located at Lime, Idaho, and not in the state of Washington. The Roche Harbor Lime & Cement Company is located at Roche Harbor, Washington, and not Friday Harbor, Washington, where the local union is located."

America Will Win Production War Against Axis Powers, Green Says

Predicts U. S. Workers Will Accomplish Defeat of Europe's Dictators

(For Release Sept. 18)

Milwaukee, Wis.—America will win the war of production against the Axis powers, President William Green of the American Federation of Labor flatly predicted in an address before the American Legion convention here.

This war of production is not being waged by men in uniform but by free American workers, Mr. Green explained, adding:

"I am proud to stand before you today and, declare without reservation or qualification that America's industrial army is the greatest in the world. America's workers are unmatched anywhere in their skill, their efficiency, their patriotism and their unconquerable spirit."

Mr. Green hit back at statements issued by Virgio Gayda, Mussolini's chief propagandist, claiming that workers are better off under Nazi-Fascist rule in Europe that here in America. He said:

"We know better than that. American workers cannot be fooled by such ridiculous propaganda. Neither can the unfortunate slaves of Hitler and Mussolini. But just to keep the record straight and for the benefit of Mr. Gayda and his friends in case they are listening in again, let me say this. The American aggressors who have conquered by fear as well as by force in Europe might just as well realize that they have met an entirely different proposition in America. We do not fear them, but they should and do fear us. We can match them and overmatch them—two guns for one, two planes for one, two warships for one—and we have what it takes to do it. They are starved even for bare necessities. We are rich in resources, we are mighty in industry and our production capacity knows no limits. Their industry is already overtaxed being systematically wrecked by bombs from American planes.

"But, above all, America is strong in the free, willing, loyal, unconquerable spirit of the great army of workers, whereas the Nazi-Fascist dictators have to depend on slave labor, on the lash and on cowed bewildered minds, on starved, weary and broken men and women kept in subjugation under the whip and waiting for the first chance to throw off and destroy their oppressors.

"Is there any doubt in your minds as to the outcome of a production war waged under such conditions? There is no doubt in mine nor in the minds of the men and women I have the honor to represent. We of the American Federation of Labor are fully confident of victory. We know that our strength and the mighty power of America. We are unshaken in our faith in American democracy and we are pitching in with everything we have to defend and preserve it.

"American labor shrugs off slurs and insults from enemy sources, such as Mr. Gayda's statement, but it is deeply hurt by unjustified criticisms directed against it, either openly or by innuendo, by Americans. The President of the United States and his subordinates in the Government at Washington have never asked the American Federation of Labor to do a single thing which it has failed to do, willingly and cheerfully. They have only to ask to assure the enactment of legislation empowering the question our patriotism or our willingness to cooperate with the Government in every way.

"Many thousands of American Federation of Labor members served in the nation's armed forces during the last war. I know a great many of them are now members of the American Legion. Today many more thousands of our younger members, or the sons or brothers of members are again serving their country. Yet the false labor attacked because it seeks wage increases while our soldiers and sailors are getting just a dollar a day. It seems obvious to me that rapidly rising living costs justify wage increases. And the very fact that members of workers' families have been called away to serve in the nation's armed forces makes it necessary for the remaining wage earners to get more to keep them and their home warm. I refuse to believe that there is any just citizen who will resent the efforts of organized labor to maintain the American standard of living in this crisis.

"Instead of unwarranted criticism which breaks down morale it seems to me that American labor deserves and should be accorded the warm support and thanks of all Americans for the glorious role it is playing in the national defense program.

"We are now appealing to recognize and acknowledge the loyalty, the constructive accomplishments and the sincere efforts of American workers to help their beloved country to the best of their ability. I pledge to you the American people that the free army of American workers, now fighting a great war of production, will never give up until that war is won."

LIBERAL ITALIAN DAILY STARTED IN NEW YORK

New York, N. Y.—"Il Mondo," a daily newspaper in Italian to present the democratic point of view, began publication here, published and edited by Giuseppe Leglio, who has been publisher and editor of the Italian language monthly "Il Mondo," since its inception in 1936. The monthly ceased publication with the appearance of the new daily, which will have a special section devoted to labor.

GREEN PRAISES NORWAY LABOR

Pledges Anti-Hitler Strikers Their Rights Will Be Restored After War

Washington, D. C. — William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, declared that the resistance of Norwegian workers against Nazi occupation "constitutes one of the most heroic chapters of trade union history."

He declared that while "there is little to say of Norway's present existance that American workers can offer their Norwegian colleagues in this tragic crisis," he could promise them that at the end of the war and the Hitler regime is crushed, the A. F. of L. "will see to it that the economic, political and social rights of free workers are restored to the world over."

His statement follows:

"American labor is proud of the unconquerable spirit of the workers of Norway. Driven to desperation by inhuman persecution, by intolerable oppression, by cruel deportation, starvation, they have thrown down their yoke and refused to labor any longer for their exploiters.

"This general strike of the Norwegian workers, in the face of every action of their leaders, mass arrests and other forms of Nazi terrorism, constitutes one of the most heroic chapters of trade union history. Hitler may finally shatter the resistance of these workers by force and slaughter, but he will never break their spirit.

"The plight of Norway's workers should impress upon the workers of America and every other nation the fate that will befall them should Hitler's drive for world domination be permitted to succeed. Knowing this, the workers of the American Federation of Labor are united in the determination that Hitler and everything he stands for must be crushed.

"There is little in the way of concrete assistance that American workers can offer their Norwegian colleagues in the present crisis. But we do extend to them the pledge that once this war is over and dictatorship is destroyed, the workers of the A. F. of Labor will see to it that the economic, political and social rights of free workers are restored the world over. Toward this end, the American Federation of Labor has invited the exiled representatives of the Norwegian Federation of Labor and the labor movements of other nations conquered by Hitler to participate at the coming American Federation of Labor convention, which opens Oct. 6 in Seattle, in the formation of a peace plan to abolish slave labor for all time."

EMPLOYERS ACCEPTING LABOR RELATIONS ACT

Washington, D. C.—So many anti-labor employers have been forced to obey the Wagner Act, 413 charges against them have fallen to a record low point, Chairman H. A. Millis of the National Labor Relations Board revealed.

By May, 1937, two-thirds of the board's cases involved unfair labor practices—that is, attempts by employers to smash unions, Millis pointed out.

Now far less than half the board's cases deal with such charges, Millis said. Most of the N. L. R. B. work has shifted to handling of employe petitions for elections, he explained.

SAN FRANCISCO ERECTS MONUMENT TO FURUSETH

San Francisco, Calif.—A large bronze bust of the late Andrew Furuseth, "emancipator of the seamen," was unveiled here on Labor Day in the park facing Market street across from the Ferry Building.

The monument was erected by the Sailors Union of the Pacific, which elected Mr. Furuseth as its secretary in 1887. For many years he was also president of the International Seaman's Union with headquarters at Washington, D. C., where he was the motivating force in securing the enactment of Federal legislation benefiting seamen until his death in 1938.

On the granite base of the monument are engraved Furuseth's words from a statement he made when threatened with imprisonment for violation of an injunction issued during a strike: "You can put me in jail. But you cannot give me narrower quarters than as a seaman I have always had. You cannot give me worse food than I have always eaten. You cannot make me lonelier than I have always been."

Harry Lundeburg, secretary of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, opened the ceremony and introduced the speakers, including Mayor Angelo Rossi, Sheriff Jim Murphy, Vice President John McLaughlin of the San Francisco Teamsters Union, and Secretary John A. O'Connell of the San Francisco Labor Council.